

ITDC had offered and signed an agreement with APTTDC in June, 2000 to act as sole ticket booking agent in respect of the following package tours being operated by APTTDC:

- (1) Bangalore-Tirupati-Bangalore
- (2) Chennai-Tirupati-Chennai

The other salient features of the agreements are:

Acting as an authorised agent of APTTDC outside the state of Andhra Pradesh, ITDC apart from working as sole agent for the above specified package tours shall also book tickets for all APTTDC services under reciprocal business tie-up on 20% commission basis. In turn, APTTDC shall also act as the representative of ITDC in the state of Andhra Pradesh for selling ITDC services on 20% commission basis.

ITDC has guaranteed a minimum booking of 25 seats for above mentioned package tours for which 10% commission on transport cost will be payable by APTTDC. For booking of over and above 25 tickets, ITDC will be entitled for a commission of 50% on the transport cost.

The agreement is valid for a period of two years to begin with, with a proviso for renewal for another one year on mutually agreed terms.

Tourist inflow

291. SHRI B. J. PANDA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the arrival of foreign tourist expected till the end of December, 2000 (in the current year);
- (b) the target set and actual number of tourist arrived from foreign countries in 1997, 1998 and 1999;
- (c) whether any specific plan has been drawn up by Government to attract the increasing number of foreign tourists to different parts of the country in the coming years;
- (d) whether any State-wise/region-wise plan has been formulated for the purpose; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) On the basis of the trend of present growth rate, the foreign tourist arrivals expected during the year 2000 are 2.6 million.

(b) The objective of the Government is to promote tourism and to increase the tourist inflow in the country. No year-wise targets as such are fixed. However, the actual number of foreign tourists who visited the country during 1997, 1998 & 1999 are 2.37 million, 2.36 million & 2.48 million respectively.

(c) Development of tourism is a continuous process. Various measures taken to attract foreign tourist to India include development and improvement of tourist facilities, publicity and marketing efforts in the foreign countries through overseas tourist offices, strengthening institutions of human resources development, use of information technology and encouraging private investment in tourism sector including hotels. The development of tourism in any State/region is mainly undertaken by the state Govts./UT Administration. However, the Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance for projects/schemes prioritised every year in consultation with them.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Financial performance of Ashok Hotel, New Delhi

292. SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH LIBRA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Ashok Hotel in New Delhi is running into heavy losses;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years, year-wise; and

(c) the various steps under consideration of Government to make the Hotel viable and profitable?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) The Ashok Hotel has suffered losses during last year only. The profitability details for the last 3 years are given as under:—

Year	Profit/loss (before tax)
1997-98	13.90
1998-99	0.01
1999-2000 (Prov.)	(-)8.33